

Town Meeting



BULLETIN OF AMERICA'S TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR

Broadcast by 300 Stations of the ABC Radio Network



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What May We Expect from Our New President?

Moderator, GUNNAR BACK

Speakers

TOM CAMPBELL

BORIS SHISHKIN

VIRGILIA PETERSON



COMING

—November 18, 1952—

**Should the Communist Party
Be Outlawed?**

Published by THE TOWN HALL, Inc., New York 36, N. Y.

VOLUME 18, NUMBER 25



\$5.00 A YEAR, 15c A COPY



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The Broadcast of November 11, 1952, from 9:00 to 9:45 p.m., EST, over the American Broadcasting Company Radio Network, originated from the field house of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, under the auspices of the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Town Hall Series, with the Troy Civic Forum and other organizations co-operating.



The account of the meeting reported in this Bulletin was transcribed from recordings made of the actual broadcast and represents the exact content of the meeting as nearly as such mechanism permits. The publishers and printer are not responsible for the statements of the speakers or the points of views presented.

THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN

VIRGILIA PETERSON—Literary critic, moderator of "The Author Meets the Critics." A New Yorker by birth, Miss Peterson was educated at Vassar College and the University of Grenoble in Southern France. There she met Prince Paul Sapieha of Poland, and, after an interlude of seven years in which she returned to New York and a career of writing magazine articles, she married the prince and went to live on his feudal estate. Her life in Poland and flight from the country in 1939 make dramatic reading in her book, *Polish Profile*.

After her divorce from Prince Sapieha, Miss Peterson became publicity director for a publishing house and resumed her writing of literary criticism. Later, she served for a time as assistant director of special events of Radio Free Europe. Miss Peterson now is moderator of "Author Meets the Critics" on TV and her book reviews appear regularly in the *New York Herald Tribune*.

TOM CAMPBELL—Editor of *Iron Age*. Mr. Campbell, a native of Pittsburgh, has had 29 years of experience in metalworking. He has worked as an inspector on hot beds and rolling mills, observer in the open hearth department, and in several research and management functions. Mr. Campbell attended Colgate and the University of Pittsburgh. He spent over five years on the metallurgical staff of Jones and Laughlin Steel Company, and seven years with Bell Telephone in a management capacity.

In 1936 he became *Iron Age's* Pittsburgh Regional Editor, moving to New York in 1943 to serve as News-Markets Editor; five years later he was promoted to Editor.

BORIS SHISHKIN—Economist for the American Federation of Labor. Born in Russia in 1906, Mr. Shishkin came to the United States in 1923 and graduated from Columbia University in 1930. From 1932-33, he was a Fellow in the Brookings Institute and in 1932 a research associate at Columbia. He has been associated with the American Federation of Labor as an economist since 1933. He was labor advisor to the NRA

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Town Meeting is published weekly at 32 S. Fourth St., Columbus 15, Ohio, by The Town Hall, Inc., New York 36, New York. Send subscriptions and single copy orders to Town Hall, New York 36, N.Y.

Subscription price, \$5.00 a year, (Canada, \$6.00); six months, \$3.00, (Canada, \$3.50); eight weeks, \$1.00, (Canada, \$1.20); 15c a single copy. Entered as second-class matter May 9, 1942, at the Post Office at Columbus, Ohio, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

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What May We Expect from Our New President?

Announcer:

Tonight, your Town Meeting continues its fall tour from Troy, New York, where we are broadcasting from the field house of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute under the auspices of the Town Hall Lecture Series which is conducted by students of the college. The Troy Civic Forum and several other community organizations are co-operating. Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute is the oldest engineering school in the English speaking world, having been founded in 1824 by Stephen Van Rensselaer for the training of young people in the application of science to the common purposes of life.

To direct this new venture in American education he chose Amos Eaton, a teacher and scientist with a genius for simplifying methods of instruction. Eaton is generally recognized as the first to use the laboratory method in a regular course in science. Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute has an enrollment of 3,000. There is one faculty member for every ten students, who learn by doing rather than by merely listening. Now to preside as moderator for tonight's discussion, here is Gunnar Back, member of the ABC network's Washington news staff.

Moderator Back:

Good evening. Town Hall comes to you tonight from the tremendously large field house of the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York. We are happy to bring you our Town Hall discussion and debate from a place of learning which is so well-known and from a field house that seems to be used constantly, judging

from the posters I've seen in Troy, to bring to the people of this city a variety of things to see and listen to, entertainment for its own sake sometimes, and again on nights like this when the entertainment is meant to inform you as well as amuse and stimulate you.

We're taking the question tonight, "What can we expect or what may we expect from our new President?" and we're guests of the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Town Hall Series conducted by the students of the school with the Troy Civic Forum and other organizations co-operating. It may seem that we're going over old ground as we go into our subject tonight. The decision has been made; Ike is in by the biggest presidential voting mandate in history. That's settled, but I think we can find some new ground tonight since our speakers are not campaigners and are speaking in their capacity tonight as citizens.

Mr. Tom Campbell, editor of *Iron Age*, a magazine for the whole metals industry, expects certain things from President Eisenhower now that he's in. Mr. Campbell will speak tonight for business, but he has a background as a worker, too, in steel. Miss Virgilia Peterson talks tonight as a homemaker (she has two children) but also as an informed American woman who has worked for the things she believes in. Miss Peterson has written a book, she has written magazine articles and book reviews, and I'm sure many of you remember her as moderator of TV's "Author Meets the Critics."

Boris Shishkin is an economist who has been with the AFL since 1933, but he has taken time out

variously to work in important posts for the Government. His work as an economist is well-known and very useful in the field. Mr. Campbell, you're first. What do you expect most of all and hope for from the new man in the White House?

Mr. Campbell: Ladies and gentlemen, I'm representing business on this program but I think we found out about a week or so ago that no one man can represent a group, so I won't speak for any individual businessman but rather attempt to give a composite view of what I think and what I have tried to find out for the past two or three months on this particular question. Businessmen in general want very simple things from the President.

They want fairness, they would like an end to the governmental interference when it's not required to settle a subject, they seem to want savings in both defense costs and civilian, and they don't expect miracles, and there isn't too much said about the change of labor laws, but more important probably than anything else they want more vigilance in the communistic question. To most of those items, if I have a chance, I will try to give the answer as the businessmen in general see this picture.

Mr. Back: Thank you very much, Mr. Campbell. And now, Miss Peterson, you're a housewife, you pay the bills, you have a son who may soon go into military service. He's of that age, and you also have a career and therefore you earn money and pay taxes. What do you, Miss Peterson, expect of the new President?

Miss Peterson: Mr. Back, when a woman speaks on some public question it's always assumed that she's speaking for all women. I

submit that women are not a specific category, or a lobby, or a homogeneous group. Certainly all women dread taxes, certainly all women hate war, but most of them are not asking for taxes to be lowered as long as the money is needed for defense. Most of them are not asking for their men to be brought back from battle as long as those men are needed in the lines. I submit that the special interest of American women today is the interest of all Americans to uphold the safety and the honor of America.

But if we have common hopes for the man who is supposed to speak and act for us in the next four years they're simple hopes. We hope that he'll spend the monies culled from our earnings as judiciously as possible, we hope that he will make sure that throughout the land there is no one who is rejected because of race or creed, we hope that he will inspire us with the trust which will keep our people from ever assassinating each other's reputations again.

And if we have aspirations in common they are also simple for the new President. Let him keep his sights raised for social justice for the world, let him show the people all over the world that we can be trusted, and that we are not fools, and let him vest this country with a dignity which is too often lost in material power, and lastly I think women hope and pray that the new President will somehow find a way, without jeopardizing the liberty we stand for, to enable us and our children and our children's children to work and sleep in peace. (*Applause*)

Mr. Back: Thank you very much, Miss Peterson. Mr. Shishkin, this was the first presidential campaign

when the AFL, the CIO, and the United Mine Workers could come together and agree on a candidate who lost. As a spokesman for organized labor tonight we're very much interested in what you expect of President Eisenhower.

Mr. Shishkin: General Eisenhower as a president elect has a very special responsibility and perhaps a heavier responsibility somewhat than any other newly elected president has ever had. The vote that was cast by the American people was cast because they liked him. It was a vote for Eisenhower much more than it possibly could have been for anything that the Republican Platform or the Republican Party said or promised. Today our Nation and the nations of the world are not united altogether, all of them, and are not at peace really. The peace is not assured, and that is because a militant, an aggressor, set of forces are rampant around the world.

The forces of Communism, under the direction of the Kremlin are stirring and striving for supremacy with every means at their command. Now directed against the whole free world but pointed at us, these are the twin methods of communist attack. One is subversion and the other one is aggression. So the two major tasks of a new president are really to deal with them. One, the primary duty of the president is to prevent a depression and to prevent the American strength from collapsing. The second one is to help keep the free world strong. Now the American Federation of Labor has pledged its support to President elect Eisenhower in these two tasks, and we hope that he will carry them out. *(Applause)*

Mr. Back: Well, thank you very much, all three. You've spoken

now in general terms of what you expect from the White House in the four years to come. I think it's time now to get to the specific. Since Mr. Campbell was the first to mention the fight against Communism, I think perhaps we might ask Mr. Campbell to tell us what he thinks the Congress will do on that subject of Communism in government.

Mr. Campbell: Well, I think that one thing that Congress will do is the same thing that most of the voters expect them to do and that is not to treat Communism as a red herring or something that may exist or may not exist. We expect also a more rigorous attempt to spot and control Communism at home, and I think that there'll be more emphasis placed on the responsibility of people who are in government or teaching professions where they have a very great effect on a great number of people, so that their past and their actions and everything else will be watched very closely to make sure that we don't have borers from within.

Mr. Back: Miss Peterson.

Miss Peterson: Well, I think that public investigations might well cease. One of my hopes, anyway, would be that Judge Learned Hand would be listened to when he said in Albany about a month ago, "It would be better to let one traitor slip through than to have every American suspecting his neighbor." *(Applause)*

Mr. Shishkin: I agree with that very strongly, and it seems to me I just have one very brief word on that. It seems to me that in our institutions we have overlooked (I think because of the clamor of the campaign) one very important positive responsibility. That is the responsibility not so much to sup-

press as to express, the responsibility to be positive in our objective and statement of the Democratic faith and its practice.

I think that in organized labor, I think in business to a very large extent the focus of attention should not be so much the witch hunt and the spy hunt as the education of our citizens to act together for the substance of things which Democracy stands for, because that is the strength which lies in us and will prevent the traitor or the subverter to capture the audience whether he be Communist or Fascist. We know that both are the threats in this present age. I think that that is the approach.

Mr. Back: Mr. Shishkin, you and Miss Peterson agree, and I see Mr. Campbell now has a point to make.

Mr. Campbell: Well, the point I wanted to make is that there is no attempt on the part of business or anybody else to do anything more than to make sure that we don't have Communists in high places. They do not believe in witch hunts. As far as letting one traitor get through, one traitor did get through and supply Russia with some of the most important secrets about the atomic bomb.

Mr. Back: I think I raised that question because I know that Senator McCarthy of Wisconsin will be the head of one committee in the new Congress which has the power to investigate, I believe. I know that the head of another committee—the house un-American activities committee—will be Representative Velde who thinks that the whole security program ought to be investigated. Therefore I am just wondering whether there will be a rash of congressional investigations and whether General Eisenhower will encourage that sort of thing or whether he will insist that

some of these might be witch hunts and therefore ought not take place. What do you think, Miss Peterson?

Miss Peterson: Well, now that it's no longer necessary to use investigations as a political football perhaps they can be dropped. (*Applause*)

Mr. Shishkin: Well, it seems to me that investigations as such should not be dropped. I think that the investigations must be carried on, and I think that some measure of responsibility in the legislative branch is necessary and useful also in this field, but we must all recognize the fact that this is an extremely intricate field, that it is a difficult field in which a high degree of skill is being exercised by the enemy.

They know all our moves and our tricks and I think that therefore our primary alliance needs to be not so much in public investigation as on the development of the facts that lead us to the extermination of those traitors and subverters who are working for the cause that is against everything that we stand for and our country is devoted to.

Mr. Back: Thank you very much, Mr. Shishkin. I think we have agreed now that we don't expect any rash investigations after the new President comes in. At any rate we expect that if there are investigations, they will be in the hands of General Eisenhower who has promised that the American way would be the way. So let's turn to the next question that must be in the minds of all the people here in this field house tonight and that is, what can we expect of the Eisenhower journey to Korea? Mr. Campbell, would you open that phase of the discussion?

Mr. Campbell: I'd like to open that phase of the discussion with

the brief statement that if he did nothing more than raise the morale of the troops that would be worth while by any measurement you want to use. I also believe that with his military experience and his ability which has already been proven that he will be able to consult with the people there and will come out of there with some kind of an idea which is more positive, perhaps, than we've had yet, but I don't think that he has promised or expects to produce miracles.

Mr. Back: Thank you, Mr. Campbell. Mr. Shishkin.

Mr. Shishkin: Well, let me put it this way. I think the General's trip to Korea is inevitable. He's going there. I think that if it's a fact-finding mission that he's going on, that kind of thing is fine, but the thing that concerns me about the emphasis that is being given to it and will be given to it, because of the headlines, in the future is that Korea is part of a larger picture. The most important threat to us today is this.

Now you remember that just a few weeks ago the Soviets had a conference in the Kremlin, a political conference, with a new design and a new party line completely shifting their policy objectives that were before. Before they wanted to stand off from any other associations and have Communists work alone. Now they want again to have the policy of a united front. That's the party line. Now their objective today and from now on out is going to be to split the major allies in the major alliance for freedom.

To break the British away from us is one that is easy because they have the coarse grain. The British have been tightening their belt. It's a political problem there, so that Europe and the Atlantic com-

munity, which is the foundation stone, must not be overlooked or obscured by this one kind of trip. I think that our attention on policy needs to be turned back to the major source—major source of evil and aggression and danger to us, which is the Kremlin.

Mr. Back: Miss Peterson, what is your feeling about the Eisenhower trip to Korea?

Miss Peterson: Simply this, that since he promised and since, of course, Korea is a raw wound on every American heart, he must go. But I would like to ask Mr. Shishkin if he thinks that there's any chance that Eisenhower would work better with Stalin, and be able to come to some terms with the Russians, than any of the other statesmen who have attempted it and failed?

Mr. Shishkin: No, I don't think he has any better chance of coming to terms and I don't think that he can come to terms on anything less than is necessary for us to achieve, when we are in a position to achieve it and not right now, when we are strong enough to really assure the aggressive war and that is the test of our ability to succeed in preserving peace.

We still have to gain the time to do it—that time that the head of the United States in understanding and agreement with other major free countries can then provide the kind of basis for peace that will lead us back to the resumption of the functioning of the United Nations on the premise which really was laid down in the last war and spelled out in the Atlantic Charter. It is freedom from the kind of persecution that Communism now is engaging in, freedom from the kind of fear that now almost half of the world is

subjected to under the Communist rule.

Mr. Campbell: Well, I want to say in regard to what Mr. Shishkin said, to bring it to a point this way, that apparently what we need in this country now is unity and co-operation. Most of the businessmen that I talked to (practically all of them) have one thing that is uppermost in their mind, and that is as far as they're concerned as businessmen, all they want is a square deal. But they also want to see this unity because only by unity, as far as we can have it, can we prevent economic trouble in this country which would play right into the hands of Stalin.

Mr. Back: Thank you very much, Mr. Campbell. I would assume from the way the discussion has been going tonight that there's a lot of unity certainly up here in this panel. Let me turn now to the next question which must be uppermost in the minds of American citizens: when do the lower prices come and when is the first cut in taxes? I may have stated it far too simply, but Mr. Campbell, you're a businessman. What do you see as the first sign that we'll be paying less taxes?

Mr. Campbell: Well, I'm not Solomon. It's already in the law that we're going to pay less taxes by law not too many months from now, but as far as Mr. Eisenhower going in there and producing a miracle overnight that's one of the things that we're a little bit afraid of. People expect too much, but I do think that there will be certain savings made, and I think one of the first places it will be made is in military expenditures and later in some civilian expenditures. But I do not believe and I don't think anybody else in the business world

believes that it will be a matter of ten days or a week.

Mr. Back: Mr. Campbell, if I may, the tax to which you referred is the excess profits tax which is no longer a law after June 30, I believe. What is your prediction about the excess profits tax? Will it be continued at the same rate? Will it be abolished entirely? Or will it be reduced? What do you think?

Mr. Campbell: I think the way it looks at the present time that there is a good probability that it will be abolished, but I do think that as soon as it is abolished as a business tax—I'm not in favor of the tax at all because I think it puts a premium on inefficiency and always has—there will almost certainly have to be a drop in taxes for individuals also.

Mr. Back: Thank you, very much. Mr. Shishkin, the economist, has some questions to raise about cutting military expenditures I presume and also cutting that tax. Mr. Shishkin.

Mr. Shishkin: I just wanted to be consecutive. We started with prices and taxes and then talked only about taxes. So about taxes first. The main argument for this cutting out of all the excess profit taxes now is that if taxes are set too high they don't provide the incentive for business to continue to be profitable and to produce efficiently. Well, we are reaching in productivity probably the most efficient level of production.

The National City Bank reports currently in just the issue that came out a few days ago that for some 350 or so corporations on which they report the taxes in the last quarter went up 2% above last year, which was quite a high level despite the tax that was imposed on it. So we don't have the

effect, the negative effect, that we would like to seek the remedy from. Now, of course, General Eisenhower as a president will not have very much to do with it. I think that people on the House side and on the Senate side, perhaps the Republican Senator Milikin, will cut the tax.

Mr. Back: Miss Peterson.

Miss Peterson: Well, I knew this conversation was going to get over my head and now it has. I must say once again that I think housewives, if I am to represent them, should be distinguished from, because the lady who keeps a mansion has a very different attitude toward prices and taxes than the lady who has to keep house in a cottage. The lady in an apartment has a different point of view than the one in a shack, so I can't speak for all housewives on this question at all. I think our main feeling is, for heaven's sake, how can we pay the tuitions in the schools, how can we keep the children in new shoes and suits and won't they please bring it down as soon as we have settled matters honorably in Korea?

Mr. Shishkin: Well, let me just have a word on the question of prices which I think is a very, very vital one. The immediate effect, because we are still engaged, the appropriations have been made, the spending goes on, we are still faced with the prospect for the next six months or so of very strong inflationary pressures.

The big question though is, are we going to go over the hump and then end up in a depression? An awful lot of people are beginning to talk that way and had begun to talk right after election day. I think that there's a great danger of our talking ourselves into a depression. But remember this one thing that stands out in importance

(and there is going to be a great deal of political pressure on it and everybody's going to have to be very alert on it) that the price controls expire on April 30.

When they expire it is of tremendous importance to us to see to it that apart from anything else a stand-by machinery for price controls is kept, because unless that is done, if in an emergency something happens to Yugoslavia, the Middle East or somewhere, you will not be able for months and months to bring together the kind of control system that will prevent our economy from blowing up again and being carried away by runaway inflation. So a stand-by machinery that can be put into effect in 48 hours is of paramount importance to the American people to keep our economy intact.

Mr. Back: Thank you very much, Mr. Campbell. Do you forecast also that price and wage controls will be dropped at the end of April?

Mr. Campbell: Not only forecast but I hope so, and I disagree with Mr. Shishkin that there should be a stand-by order, because I think production of American industry itself has been the answer and not controls as to why we have an easier condition in some products. I think controls could be tossed out tomorrow and it wouldn't make a bit of difference, because the law of supply and demand would start to work and production has already done its work.

Mr. Shishkin: But you don't mean, Mr. Campbell, that in case there's an all-out war suddenly and a real emergency . . .

Mr. Campbell: No, I do not believe . . .

Mr. Shishkin: Will not justify—that's what I'm talking about.

Mr. Campbell: Well, you said if something broke out over in whatever country . . .

Mr. Shishkin: And a full-fledged mobilization took place here the demand certainly would be ten times more than the supply.

Mr. Campbell: What I would like to point out is that at no time during this defense program has any business been behind as far as producing for military and for defense is concerned. As to whether we ought to have these strict controls if all-out war breaks out, possibly we might, but we certainly don't need them in a defense program.

Mr. Shishkin: If we hadn't had the price and wage controls today you certainly would have been in a depression right now, Mr. Campbell.

Mr. Campbell: Well, I doubt that.

Mr. Back: Well, thank you very much. I want to turn to another question in just a moment. Every week on America's Town Meeting we ask our speakers a question submitted in advance by a listener. A 20 volume set of the American people's Encyclopedia is on its way to the person whose question our program staff considered the most appropriate and pertinent to tonight's topic. We want to thank everybody who sent us their questions.

Next week another set of the American people's Encyclopedia will be given for a timely question written in 25 words or less and sent in on a post card. Later in the program we'll tell you about next Tuesday's topic. Please mail your question not later than November 14, midnight, to Town Meeting Questions, New York 36, New York. This week Mr. Arthur Ed-

ward Rowse of West Ecton, Massachusetts, will receive a set of the American people's Encyclopedia for submitting to the panel the following question: "What are the main obstacles the new President will face in trying to carry out his campaign promises?" Now that should give you a chance, Mr. Campbell. I'll call on you first. Obstacles, remember.

Mr. Campbell: Was there an "s" on that?

Mr. Back: Let me see. Yes, obstacles. There's an "s" on that.

Mr. Campbell: Well, I would like to say in all sincerity that the main obstacle that Mr. Eisenhower will have to carry out his program will be the obstacle which is brought about by a return to previous complacency. Now having gotten one of the largest voting percentages that we've had in years, now having gotten everybody from the cradle to the grave, almost, to vote, the people are liable to sit back and say, "Well now it's done," and he will not have the support that he needs to carry out this job which becomes tougher all the time.

Mr. Back: Thank you very much, Mr. Campbell. Miss Peterson, do you see other obstacles?

Miss Peterson: Perhaps in some sense the obstacles that while he was campaigning certain people on his party agreed with him about certain things that the rest of the world doesn't agree about and, therefore, the European situation might be quite an obstacle for General Eisenhower—to lead without offending, to overcome the sense of humiliation in Europe that they all feel because we lead them, and also their fear and uncertainty because of his election.

Mr. Back: Well, Miss Peterson,

could you be more specific on that? Do you mean that there will be the obstacle of Senator Taft? Are you saying that?

Miss Peterson: I'm trying to say that in as delicate a way as I can. I think the European countries feel that the Republican Party represented, in that side of it at least, isolationism and turning away from responsibility in Europe. I think that they hate to be helped by us and at the same time they must have our help, and if we cannot line up with them and have complete unity with them we cannot possibly save our free world.

Mr. Back: Mr. Shishkin.

Mr. Shishkin: Well, it seems to me that one of the great difficulties and I think that leadership of General Eisenhower is going to be very great. He's an outstanding American and I think that for quite a spell, for some months at least, I think that he will be able to command very good support in the Congress. But if you look back on the campaign and remember that General Eisenhower, and I take him completely at his word, said, "Well, I haven't changed, I really mean these things. Some years ago I made a speech about social security, but I am for more social security, I am advocating these things. We do need a stronger

America. We do need greater protection for our people. We do need a prevention for the depression."

But when it comes down to measures on those, he'll find it difficult, striving to obtain these objectives, to find in his own party sufficient support, and also bearing in mind the reactionary Dixiecrats on the Democratic side, to get the majority in Congress to carry some of those objectives out. I think that's one of the great political obstacles that the President will have, in the next term.

Mr. Back: Mr. Campbell, you raised your eyebrow, go ahead.

Mr. Campbell: Thank you. Just a short statement. I think that the very thing that Mr. Shishkin talks about will be solved by the thing that got Mr. Eisenhower in, and that's his leadership which has been proven time and time again and I agree with him that no deals were made.

Mr. Back: Well, thank you very much. There doesn't seem to be very much conflict. Everybody tonight is willing to give General Eisenhower a chance, apparently. The audience is ready to fire some questions at you and I think you are going to have to go to work. Let me turn to my left first and I think a young lady is waiting to ask her question there at the aisle.



QUESTIONS, PLEASE!

Lady: Mr. Campbell, how can Mr. Eisenhower's foreign policy reconcile both the views of Taft and the more conservative elements and those of Dewey and the more internationally minded elements of his party?

Mr. Campbell: I'll answer that question by saying what I've said

before that Mr. Eisenhower is going to be his own leader and has no deal and, since he is more or less what you might term an internationalist, I think that he is the one who is going carry on a policy which shows that we belong to the free world.

Mr. Back: Mr. Shishkin, do you

want to challenge that or do you have a difference of opinion?

Mr. Shishkin: No, I think there is an inherent difficulty as Miss Peterson pointed out before, but I think that in this field at this time we are in a defense mobilization program. We haven't stopped that, you know. The Communist threat has not ended; the Korean War has not stopped; the Indo-China War hasn't ended, and I think that General Eisenhower understands the issues. He can provide enough leadership to do away with a kind of threat of an isolationist tidal wave sweeping over this country that some other leader might not have prevented, and I have full confidence that he will attempt to do so.

Mr. Back: Thank you very much. Miss Peterson?

Miss Peterson: Well, I think that the UN is certainly a thing that should be considered in all this. Something will have to be done about the UN right away. The terrible uncertainty in which they are sitting with no authority to speak and the Americans unable to represent us at this moment is one of the worst situations for the future of Eisenhower's foreign policy. Something ought to be done about it immediately, I think.

Mr. Back: I think Senator Wiley who will be Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has already asked General Eisenhower to come into that picture, hasn't he? Perhaps we'll know something about that in a day or two. Another question is ready for us.

Lady: Miss Peterson, can we expect lower prices in foodstuffs and clothing without a lowering of the standard of living?

Miss Peterson: I don't know

how to answer that question because I don't see that the standard of living would necessarily be lowered by lower prices in the sense that we'd still have enough to eat and enough to clothe ourselves with. Do you mean we might not have as many steaks or be as elegant?

Lady: Well, how do they propose to lower the prices?

Miss Peterson: I don't think they can lower them until after the demobilization.

Mr. Back: Mr. Shishkin, do you want to help Miss Peterson out at this point, you being an economist? How do you feel about lower prices? Can they be achieved?

Mr. Shishkin: Well, I think that we've learned by experience that you can't draw prices back without a lot of people being hurt. In our economy, and without a great fear that lower prices will mean a decline of business and people getting a depression psychology accumulating and, therefore, lowering the standard of living by a lot of people out of work. Therefore we really have to work for the maintenance of the present standard of living and prevention of unreasonable up-rising where there are commodity shortages. That is what I am talking about when I indicate that there is need for credit and, currently, still some price controls to prevent these special groups from getting out of hand, and the economy getting out of line. Remember that we have in production today freezers, washing machines, and other things that are running out of our ears which might result in somewhat lower prices, unless there is the buying power necessary to take that up,

which I think potentially we have but we have to keep it up.

Mr. Back: That was a very tough figure of speech. Mr. Campbell.

Mr. Campbell: I think Mr. Shishkin is a little bit behind in his figures, because beginning in the first week of August and continuing right up to the present time the sales of washers and freezers have picked up substantially, and when I checked them last week they were still picking up. But to get back to this price situation there is one way to reduce prices or to keep them steady—that's to increase production. In order to increase production, you must make a profit. What you use a profit for is to use material to make it cheaper, and there's only one way to keep prices down and that's to make things cheaper, and the way to make things cheaper is to offset labor costs with machines that will make them cheaper.

Mr. Back: Thank you very much, Mr. Campbell. I want to go back to the question again. A gentleman is waiting at this point, sir.

Man: My question is addressed to Mr. Shishkin. What will become of the Taft-Hartley Law with the new Republican administration?

Mr. Back: Mr. Shishkin, I'm glad that that question was asked.

Mr. Shishkin: Well, I'm glad that that question was asked also. I think it's a very important and a very vital question. General Eisenhower addressed our convention of the American Federation of Labor on December 17, fairly late in the campaign and he indicated very clearly what he wanted to do to amend the inequities in the Taft-Hartley Law and he said so specifically.

Now the ability of General Eisenhower to carry out through

Congressional enactment these amendments is another question. We hope that he'll be able to provide support for these proposals and that the really vicious features of the Taft-Hartley Law will be eliminated very shortly. But there is a further question behind that and that is the ability of General Eisenhower to provide the basis for the kind of understanding and agreement on the part of labor and management to get back of those changes that will help better labor relations and industrial peace. That is the important part, and the burden of responsibility is on management and labor.

Mr. Back: Mr. Shishkin, could you give me a quick answer to this question? Do you expect that industry-wide bargaining, by which the whole steel industry bargains at one time, will be eliminated?

Mr. Shishkin: Well, it isn't true of the steel industry. There's no industry-wide bargaining, and separate agreements exist; but we have some industries which do have agreements, have had since 1882.

Mr. Back: Do you forecast that that would be banned by the new Congress?

Mr. Shishkin: I hope not, because in some of those industries the agreements have maintained industrial peace better and there haven't been any strikes for the last 15 years in those industries.

Mr. Back: Thank you very much. Back to the questioners again and this gentleman.

Man: Mr. Shishkin, Will President Eisenhower appoint advisers and a cabinet of experts who are competent in their field or will he appoint deserving Republican supporters?

Mr. Shishkin: Well, let's put it

this way. I think that the pattern has been laid down pretty clearly. For three years I was associated with the work of the Economic Co-operation Administration overseas serving in Europe. Now in the ECA, Paul Hoffman was a Republican. On the staff he had Bill Foster as a deputy who is now the Assistant Secretary of Defense, who is a Republican. We had a number of key Republicans, including Mr. Clarence Randolph, who were doing that work and all of them were Republicans. In order to have a defense program that's united, it's essential to have people regardless of their party affiliations to represent all segments of technical ability in all parties.

Mr. Back: Mr. Campbell, I'll give you just a moment to reply.

Mr. Campbell: It'll only take a moment. I have this jotted down as far as most of the businessmen I have talked to. We expect that men of merit, understanding, and knowledge will be appointed to governmental positions and that this shall be the criterion for filling jobs.

Mr. Back: Thank you very much, Mr. Campbell. Another question from the floor.

Man: Miss Peterson, what will be the policy of the new administration toward selective service?

Miss Peterson: I haven't got the vaguest idea. I'm going to pass this to my superiors on either side of me. Mr. Campbell, do you know anything about selective service?

Mr. Campbell: I don't know where she gets the superior idea, but as far as this question of selective service it's going to be the kind of an answer which can be vague for the simple reason that this country is still in danger from

the Communists. We need this country prepared for the Communist threat and I believe that the Communist threat is far worse than most of us have any idea.

Mr. Back: Thank you very much. Another question from this lady.

Lady: My question is directed to Mr. Shishkin. What will our new President be able to do to stop inflation?

Mr. Shishkin: Well, we're getting back to the points that were already made. In order to stop inflation at this present time I think that more measures than just voluntary measures are necessary. Inflation will not be prevented, but I think that the responsibility carried out under the same work that has been laid down in the past is important to continue. Whether General Eisenhower will support that, whether he will get Congressional support for that kind of an approach, is something that I wonder and unless he does I'm afraid that we might have some difficulties. We all ought to work for a state economy and an expanding economy in the future.

Mr. Back: Thank you very much. Another question.

Man: Mr. Tom Campbell, do you expect that the new administration will revise the Wage Stabilization Board appointments and make a truly impartial board?

Mr. Campbell: As far as I think about that problem it covers the whole picture in that General Eisenhower will be fair to both labor and management. And if on getting to that job for which he was elected he finds out that they are unfair to either one side or the other I think he'll take action on the very thing you talked about.

Mr. Back: Okay, Mr. Campbell. A question from this young lady.

Mr. Shishkin: Just a second, I just wanted to make clear that Mr. Campbell is being fair about those appointments, but he's just abolished the Wage Stabilization Board five minutes ago, so he can't have both.

Mr. Back: Thank you, Mr. Shishkin.

Mr. Campbell: I didn't abolish the Wage Stabilization Board, I abolished controls on allocations and prices.

Mr. Shishkin: Oh, just control wages. That's your formula, huh?

Mr. Back: Your turn now, young lady.

Lady: Miss Peterson, do you think that the vice president's job will be greater now that Nixon is in?

Miss Peterson: I am afraid that I belong to the defeated party in this election, and my feeling about the vice president . . . (applause)

Mr. Back: Did you finish your answer?

Miss Peterson: I have nothing more to say, because I think it's better to be silent about my feeling toward the vice president. (Applause)

Mr. Back: Thank you very much.

We have time for a very quick question and a quick answer.

Man: Mr Shishkin, can we expect the new administration to change our policy in Western Germany so as to curb Nazi resurgence which apparently has been incurred in our present policy?

Mr. Shishkin: I think it's a very important question. I think it's one with which General Eisenhower is familiar and I certainly hope that it can be carried out. It's a very vital thing and I think that our ability to deal effectively with the Communist threat depends very largely on our ability to prevent Fascist resurgence not only in Western Europe but also elsewhere.

Mr. Back: Well, thank you very much, Mr. Campbell, Miss Peterson, and Mr. Shishkin for your discussion of tonight's topic. On behalf of Town Hall, we wish to thank the officials and students of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, the Troy Civic Forum and co-operating organizations and station WXXW, the ABC outlet for the cities of Troy, Schenectady and Albany and the *Record* newspapers. So plan to with us next week and every week at the sound of the Crier's Bell.



THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN

(Continued from page 2)

from 1933-35 and to the Office of Production Management from 1941-42. From 1942-46, he was co-chairman of the OPA labor policy committee. During the same period he served on the President's committee on Fair Employment Practices. He has been a member of the President's Commission on Civil Rights since 1946. In addition, Mr. Shishkin is a contributor to the *American Federationist* and other magazines, and has been a radio commentator.

Moderator: GUNNAR BACK—Member of the ABC network's Washington news staff.

BEHIND THE CRIER'S BELL



A friendly yet authoritative new voice piloting recent "Town Meeting" discussions is that of Gunnar Back, one of Washington's—and the ABC network's—top newsmen. Mr. Back, together with our "old friend" Orville Hitchcock, Professor of Speech at Iowa State University, is sharing the moderating role throughout the winter months. In general, Mr. Back will handle broadcasts from New York and other Eastern cities, while Dr. Hitchcock will be on hand for originations in the West.

Gunnar Back is a veteran radio newsman, having covered the Washington scene for more than ten years. As a comparative newcomer to the ABC net work, he recently distinguished himself with objective reporting of the political conventions, campaign and election.

Born in Escanaba, Michigan, Mr. Back spent three years in Northern Michigan lumber towns as a one-room school teacher before entering the University of Wisconsin. While studying there for his Master's degree, he was an instructor in the English department and started his radio reporting career on the University station, WHA. He also wrote for the Madison and Milwaukee papers.

After working as a newsman at several midwestern radio stations, Mr. Back was called to Washington by CBS network and he remained there for ten years before transferring to ABC. He has narrated several award-winning documentaries, covered three Presidential inaugurations and served as the announcer at many of the late President Roosevelt's fireside chats.

Now one of the busiest Washington correspondents, Gunnar Back is featured on nightly television and radio news programs locally over WMAL, the ABC outlet in the nation's capital. His regular coast-to-coast ABC broadcasts include "Headline Edition," "This Week Around the World," "News of Tomorrow" and "Crossfire." He is the regular moderator of the "Crossfire." Mr. Back also finds time to handle special events and conducts full-hour training telecasts for civil defense which are fed by closed circuit TV cables to civil defense workers assembled in theaters in major eastern cities.

Mr. Back spends his rare leisure hours with his wife and two children in their Fairfax county, Virginia, home near the Potomac and Mt. Vernon. Studies of outdoor lore and Virginia history provide him with "escape" from the tension of assignments before the microphone.